

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Couper.*



MR. SPARROW AND HIS NEW LANDLADY.

BOY AND MAN.

PART II.

CHAPTER VII.—OUT OF TOWN.

"The sea, the sea, the open sea,
The blue, the fresh, the ever free!"

—B. W. Procter.

MR. SPARROW, returning to his rooms at Kensington, came to the conclusion that the north side of London was inconveniently distant from the south, and not in itself so agreeable as he had

been used to consider it. Kensington was decidedly dull, and he wondered much what could have induced him to settle there; for a man of his business habits it was a long way from the brewery, and the omnibuses very unpunctual; in fact, he had often said, *Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit*; he defied anybody to make out their times. He was only living in apartments, therefore it would be easy for him to shift his quarters; and though All Saints' in the South was not, in some respects, so pleasant

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PRICE ONE PENNY.

as Kensington, yet it was nearer the brewery, and would be very handy for the ragged-school, in which he meant to become a regular teacher. He made up his mind, therefore, to look out for a lodging at once in Joy Street, or its immediate neighbourhood; he would call and speak to Mr. Armiger about it the very next day on his way to business.

Lodgings were to be had in the parish, the curate told him, from threepence per night upwards; but there was a limit to the upwards. Nothing very choice or airy was to be found in the immediate neighbourhood at any price. Mr. Sparrow looked at two or three "drawing-rooms," but could not feel himself drawn very strongly towards any of them. He was not fastidious. "Still, you know, I should like something—something like, you know," he said to Mr. Armiger.

"I'm afraid you will have to go a little farther off," the curate answered. But that did not meet Mr. Sparrow's view either. At length some rooms were found in a quiet court not very far from Joy Street. It was an old house which had seen better days and better neighbours, having been gradually closed in by smaller dwellings. The rooms were tolerably large, though very scantily furnished; but that was a deficiency which Mr. Sparrow could supply: indeed, he seemed to think it a great advantage. "Because, you know," he said, "I can buy things that I like; and I shall want to furnish a whole house before long, and then I shall have something to begin with." So he settled with his landlady at once, and begged that the rooms might be got ready for him with as little delay as possible.

The landlady seemed to be very much pleased that she had found a tenant. She was a little "lady-like-looking person in appearance," as her neighbours said. She seemed to have seen better days, like her house, in which she had formerly kept a school, when the neighbourhood was more select. "Would you like the whole suite?" she asked.

"As sweet as you can make them," Mr. Sparrow replied, innocently; "they seem very nice and clean already; that's a great recommendation."

The terms were fixed, and all things satisfactorily agreed upon, and within a week Mr. Sparrow had removed to his new quarters, and had enrolled himself as a regular teacher in Duck Court Ragged Schools, and a regular attendant at All Saints' Church. A valuable teacher Mr. Armiger found him too, not only on account of his punctuality, but from a certain easy good-nature and simplicity of manner, which seemed to win the hearts of his ragged pupils, and to give him an influence over them of which he himself was almost unconscious. He had a class of big boys, who were disposed at first to take liberties with him; but before he had been there many weeks, though they were on very free and easy terms with him, they were generally careful not to say or do anything that would annoy him. If there was any disturbance in another class, he could, with a look or a word, prevent his own from taking any part in it. When they asked questions, he would answer them with some short tale or anecdote by way of illustration, or would promise to find out and tell them all about it next school night, confessing his ignorance rather than pretending to know anything of which he was not sure. He would sometimes bring pictures for them to look at, such as he knew would interest and amuse them after the more serious business of the three R's was over. But the secret of

his hold upon them lay in the genuine kindness and simplicity of his manner, which made them feel that he did not think himself, and perhaps was not, so far removed from them as, by the accident of his position, one might have supposed. It soon came to be an object of ambition with the boys, whether big or little, to get into Mr. Sparrow's class: "he was such a jolly bird."

One afternoon, as Mr. Sparrow was returning from his place of business to his suite of rooms, he observed in the Borough a group of people before a chemist's shop. A cab was drawn up by the kerb, and appeared to be an object of great interest to the crowd.

"What is the matter?" he asked of a policeman, who seemed to be in charge.

"Boy run over!" was the answer.

"Is he much hurt?"

"Can't say; he's in yonder. Are you a doctor?"

Mr. Sparrow availed himself of the policeman's help to gain admittance to the shop. The chemist and his assistants were grouped round the figure of a boy, stretched upon the floor, apparently insensible, and were trying to restore him to consciousness.

"Where is he hurt?" Mr. Sparrow asked.

"Leg broken, I'm afraid. I wish somebody would bring a stretcher from the union."

"Where does he live?"

"Don't know; he'll be most at home at the union by the looks of him. This comes of cat'n-wheeling in the streets."

"What is his name?"

The boy opened his eyes, and said, faintly, "Teacher!"

"Says his name's 'Teacher.' Don't look like one," the chemist remarked.

Mr. Sparrow knelt down by the poor boy's side.

"Why, Nott, is it you?"

The boy smiled. "Oh, Teacher!" he said. "Oh, Mr. Sparrow!"

"I'll take care of you," Mr. Sparrow answered. "Send for a doctor; I know this boy; I'll pay."

A doctor was already at the door, forcing his way through the crowd, not particular about payment. Wherever there is suffering in this Christian land of ours, there is sure to be a doctor at hand, pay or no pay. The limb was not broken, he said, but terribly contused and cut by the wheel of the cab, which had passed over it. He dressed and tied it up loosely, and the boy was carried by four volunteers, upon a stretcher, to the Hospital. Mr. Sparrow went with him, and did not leave him till he had seen him stripped of his rags and placed in bed, clean and well cared for, and, but for the pain he suffered, more comfortable than he had ever been before in his short life.

The next day, and the next, and frequently afterwards, Mr. Sparrow went to see him, congratulating himself every time that his lodgings were so near at hand. He had told the story to Mrs. Armiger and Miss Annie Goodchild, who was still in Joy Street, and went there nearly every evening to report how his patient was getting on. It was a tedious business—not for Mr. Sparrow, but for Nott, attended with a great deal of feverish suffering. But after a few weeks the boy was convalescent, and Mr. Sparrow was told that he would soon receive his discharge. The question then arose, What was to be done with him? where was he to go? He did not appear to have a relative in the world, and did not remember

to have ever slept in a bed until he was carried to that hospital. Although his wound was healed, he required care, and, above all, good nourishment. He could go to the workhouse, certainly; and there seemed to be no other place for him.

Mr. Sparrow spoke to his landlady about him. "I think," said he, "that I should like to keep a servant—a boy, you know, just to clean knives and shoes, you know."

"Why, sir, you don't use above two or three knives a-day; and as to the shoes, it's cheaper paying a penny a pair, as you do, brushes and blacking included, than keeping a servant."

"I dare say it is, but I want to have that poor boy here who was run over."

"Oh, that's another thing, Mr. Sparrow. I'm not partial to cat'n-wheel boys, and should not put much trust in them myself; but you can do as you please; I would not make any objection if you wish it."

"He'll eat up the cold meat, you know, and so on," said Mr. Sparrow; but remembering as soon as he had spoken that this might be anything but a recommendation to the poor lady, he added, with delicacy, "of course, I would pay a little extra for the rooms, you know, as it would give you more trouble, Mrs. Rundell; and you'll be kind to him, won't you?"

"Anybody would be kind to everybody for your sake, Mr. Sparrow, I'm sure. I'll make him comfortable if he'll only behave; that's all I'm afraid of; whether he'll behave."

"He's sure to behave," said Mr. Sparrow; "and properly, I hope. If he does not, we need not keep him, you know."

So Nott was taken home to Mr. Sparrow's rooms, and occupied one of the suite; he wore Mr. Sparrow's old clothes cut small, and ate enormously, and was never contented but when he had knives or shoes to clean, or errands to run on, or something or other to do in his master's service.

It had been a hot season in London, and all who could manage it had made their plans for a holiday and a change somewhere, though changes were not yet so easily to be had as time and railways were to make them, nor holidays so general and indispensable as coming generations would consider them to be. Mr. Armiger, with his wife and child, were going to Broadstairs by the General Steam Navigation Company's boat from London Bridge; and baby was to have his first experience of sea-breezes, and to derive no end of benefit from it, for he had not been growing or crowing lately to his mother's satisfaction. So there is a cab at the door of the house in Joy Street, loaded with luggage, and the curate is rather in a fidget lest he should be too late, for baby has been troublesome all night, and does not understand that the process of putting on his cloak and hood is intended for his benefit, and so kicks and screams and opposes himself to the arrangement with all his little might. They are off at last, however, and arrive at the wharf just as the bell is ringing. Mr. Sparrow, springing from another cab—a queer looking thing, with the door behind it, and a small seat on each side, familiarly known as an "omnibus chop"—helps to make a thoroughfare for them through the crowd, and over the planks to the steam-packet. He is followed by his servant Nott, a strange-looking boy since his accident, with a large head, great, round eyes, a thin face, and a small body, like an immense, unfledged bird; a man, accord-

ing to Plato's famous definition, "*animal bipes implume*," a creature with two feet and no feathers, but suggestive of feathers plucked out. He carries loosely upon his person a suit of Mr. Sparrow's clothes, adapted, and on his shoulders the remainder of that gentleman's wardrobe, staggering under the burden, but resolved to carry it on board or perish. He limps a little, and may thank the good surgeons and Mr. Sparrow that he is really "*bipes*," for he had nearly lost one of his legs in consequence of his accident; and then what would he have been, in the Platonic sense? Mr. Sparrow thinks the sea-air will be a great thing for him; besides which, he will be so useful in the lodgings at Broadstairs, and can help a little with the baby.

There are three steamboats lying side by side, all steaming as if in a great hurry to be off, and all more or less crowded with passengers and porters, who do not seem to know which boat is going where; so that it will not be surprising if Mr. Sparrow should find himself at nightfall at Calais or Boulogne instead of at Broadstairs. Wherever the fates may lead him, it is probable that Miss Goodchild will go with him; for he has secured her a comfortable seat on deck, in the wrong boat, and they are only rescued at the last moment by Mr. Armiger after he has seen the baby safe, and have to leap across a gap from one vessel to the other, at peril of their lives, as the Margate boat heaves off. And if Mr. Sparrow had not grasped Miss Annie's hand so tight, and clasped her so closely to himself at the critical moment, there is no knowing what might have become of her. As for Nott, he has found his way after them, somehow or other, portmanteau and all, and keeps his eye on them incessantly.

Now they are fairly started. No! Stop her! back her! Again; but there are two barges in the way. Again; this time it is hopeless; the river is choked up with ships and boats; there is no room even for a wherry to pass down. Yet somehow they move on; the Custom House and the Tower come alongside; the docks, where masts of large ships mingle with the house-tops, as if they had stepped ashore to allow smaller craft to pass Blackwall, one after another approach and recede. But new forests arise, with long straight naked branches, to all appearance impenetrable; yet the vessel glides gently and securely through the labyrinth, past Greenwich, Woolwich, and so on, to more open waters, with fresher, cooler breezes overhead.

Soon after they had passed Gravesend dinner was announced, and all were ready for it, though the cabin was hot and stuffy. The captain took the head of the table, in a halo of steam, as became his position, and somebody else sat at the foot, so far off as to be almost invisible; and when the former knocked upon the table with his knife, and requested the clergyman who sat near him to say grace, Nott, who held himself in readiness behind his master's chair, nodded his head approvingly, and murmured audibly "Amen." After that he devoted himself steadily to his master's interests, bringing to him, and all his party, plates of veal and ham, with onion sauce, or roast beef and turnips, or any other tasty combination which his own appetite suggested, and taking good care "as they shouldn't want for nothing," putting aside whatever they refused for his own refectation afterwards. It was a marvel where all the dishes came from. The little round-house upon deck seemed hardly large enough to hold the cook, much

less the cookery; yet out of it proceeded all kinds of roast and boiled meats, poultry, vegetables, tarts, and puddings in abundance, steaming hot—steaming a little too much, if anything. But the great dish of all was the red corned beef—a joint sufficient to remind them that they were indeed on board ship, and would soon be out at sea—red, and hard, and salt as the great deep itself. One or two delicate ladies fell ill at the sight of it, being persuaded that the critical time had come, and went on deck, desiring that biscuits and brandy might follow them.

There was some pleasure in a summer holiday in those days. In the first place, the event itself was stranger, rarer. The very journey was exciting and delightful; there was a novelty and romance about it which was looked forward to with pleasing anticipation, and remembered afterwards for its adventures. There was no hot, dusty railway-train, dashing along in a tremendous hurry, as well it may be, to get the journey over, plunging into a ditch, and running underground just when there is a pretty bit of scenery, or a fine old church tower that one wants to look at; but a cheery drive on the outside of a coach, up and down hill, with odoriferous bean-fields, winding rivers, gorse-covered commons, and here and there village inns for halting and refreshment if the travel be by road; and the still rarer sights and sounds, if it be by water, of river traffic, with the great sea opening upon the view, and the ships, with their huge sails bending to the breeze, and the white cliffs of the Kentish coast upon the starboard bow. Oh, what a change was this from All Saints' in the South, Joy Street, and Duck Court! God made the country, and man made the town! What life, what health, what elasticity, that fresh, pure sea-air carried with it as it met them, when they emerged from the cabin and stood upon the bridge of the steamer, enjoying its first undulating movements, and feeling as if sea-sickness, or even squeamishness, were a thing impossible in the face of such a breeze. How every sound, every voice, seemed to ring in the clear pure air with unaccustomed harmony. Alas! that there should be any interruption to such enjoyment! It was not meant for land-lubbers. Very soon the passengers became more silent, and were contented to sit down, or stretch themselves at length upon the benches.

"Would you not like to go below?" Mr. Sparrow says to his fair companion: "don't you feel the air a little cool? Won't you have your cloak or shawl?"

"No, I thank you, Mr. Sparrow; put them away in the cabin for me, or lay them down here. I am so sorry you should be troubled with them."

"I like it," he said, "it's no trouble. What a good sailor you are!"

A minute afterwards he was gone, and did not reappear for nearly a quarter of an-hour.

"How do you feel now?" he asked.

"Oh, capital! Do look at those beautiful gulls, skimming over the waves and brushing the crest of the billows with their wings."

Mr. Sparrow did look at them, but from a different point of view, nearer the bulwarks. He feared Miss Goodchild would think him ungallant; but he could not help it. He returned presently to her side, but before they arrived at Margate he had again forsaken her, stretched at full length upon a bench at the other end of the vessel, Nott standing near him, in case he should be wanted, but whiter, and more like a naked bird than ever; the nurse, in a

state of collapse on the floor of the ladies' cabin, and Mrs. Armiger upon a sofa, sitting up heroically, with her baby crowing and kicking to her heart's content, and perhaps a little beyond it, in her arms.

"I should like to go home by the road," Mr. Sparrow thought, as they landed at the jetty in the evening. "It spoils one's pleasure, this sort of thing. I should not have minded it so much if I had been alone. Yet it was worth something to see her; how she stood it! I never beheld anybody like her in my life. She's good at everything."

ARCTIC EXPEDITIONS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

BY EDWARD WHYMPER, F.R.G.S.

IX.—PARRY'S THIRD VOYAGE IN SEARCH OF A NORTH-WEST PASSAGE (1824-5).

PARRY was received at home with open arms. He was strongly supported by the "Quarterly Review," was made hydrographer to the Admiralty, and, almost simultaneously, was appointed to command another expedition. "The confidence," said his instructions, "which we are justified in placing in your judgment and experience, determine us to authorise and direct you to pursue the course which you consider the most promising, namely, through Prince Regent's Inlet."*

In the narrative of his first voyage, Parry had expressed the opinion that a communication, in all probability, existed between Prince Regent's Inlet and Hudson's Bay. This opinion was correct; and the passage is the strait through which he could not pass on his second voyage. If he could have sailed through the Fury and Hecla Strait, he would have come out into a large sea which later explorers have called the Gulf of Boothia, and which is, in reality, the southern termination of Prince Regent's Inlet. As it seemed that the Fury and Hecla Strait was always more or less choked by ice, it appeared to Parry that he would be likely to arrive at its western end more quickly by proceeding through Lancaster Sound, and down Prince Regent's Inlet, than he would by passing through the strait itself. He still intended to hug the coast-line of the continent of America, and had no idea of attempting to discover a route through the archipelago still farther to the north.

The same vessels were employed upon this as upon the last voyage. Parry, however, took command of the Hecla, and Captain Hoppner† of the Fury. The season proved unfavourable. Although they sailed early in May, 1824, they did not get fairly into Lancaster Sound until September 11, and into Prince Regent's Inlet before the 26th. The navigable season was already over. Young ice formed so constantly and so thickly, that they found themselves under the necessity of immediately seeking a wintering place. There was only one suitable spot known, namely, Port Bowen, on the eastern side of the inlet, and there they took refuge on October 1, and remained frozen up for more than nine months and a-half. During this long time next to nothing was done in the way of exploration, and it is not

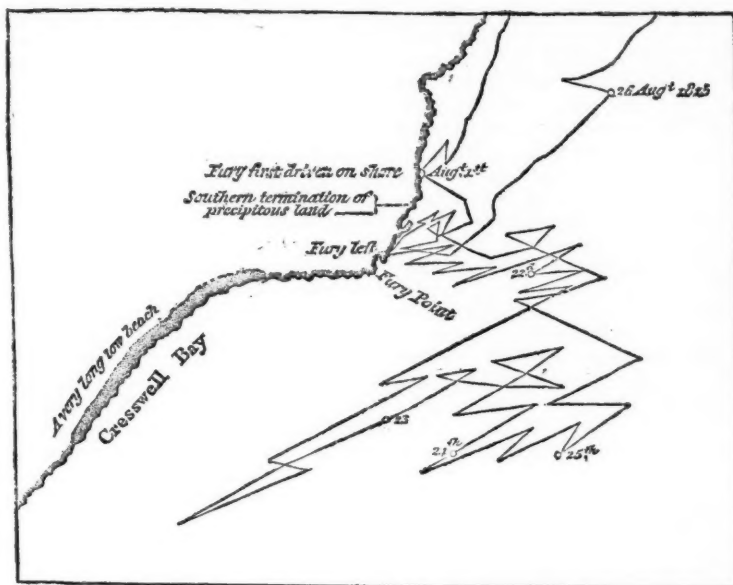
* For the situation of Prince Regent's Inlet, see the map accompanying the account of Parry's first voyage.

† Hoppner had been engaged on the three previous voyages, but he did not again serve in the Arctic regions.

clear why this was the case. Three parties were sent out in the spring, one northwards up the coast, a second southwards, and a third into the interior, but all travelled very short distances, and can hardly be said to have discovered anything.

The ships escaped from Port Bowen on July 20, 1825, and immediately proceeded to the opposite, or western side of Prince Regent's Inlet, to endeavour to get to the south by coasting the land. Pretty nearly the whole of the sea was covered by massive floes, and there was only occasionally a narrow lane of water between its margin and the land by which

had nine feet of water in her, and was damaged irreparably. They had neither the means of making the damage good, nor of hauling her off, so she was of necessity abandoned, with all her stores, as there was no space to spare after the Fury's crew was received on board. On the 26th the Hecla sailed away, leaving the sister ship hopelessly wrecked, and her stores upon the beach, where they had been landed.* The harassing nature of the proceedings of these last days will be understood by reference to the annexed outline (copied from Parry's chart), on which the track of the Hecla is laid down:—



TRACK OF THE HECLA.

the vessels could progress. When the ice closed with the land they were always in imminent peril of being crushed or forced on shore. The Fury was the first to get aground, on July 31. She came off without serious injury; but on the following day both ships went ashore, and the Fury, through being "nipped" and strained, began to leak badly. Four pumps had to be kept incessantly going in order to keep the water down. "It had now become too evident that the Fury could proceed no farther without repairs, and that the nature of those repairs would in all probability involve the disagreeable, I may say the ruinous, necessity of heaving the ship down." This was likely to prove an arduous business, for there were no harbours in the neighbourhood, and the beach was exposed to continual incursions of ice.

The operation was set about vigorously, after constructing a kind of open deck, by straining cables, leading from anchors on shore, around masses of grounded ice. All hands were employed to clear the Fury of her stores, and when they were got out it was readily seen what had to be done to make the ship seaworthy. All their efforts, however, were useless, for before the repairs could be executed the weather became so bad that the Hecla had to run out to sea to save herself. After beating about for several days, they found, on getting back to their consort, that she had been again forced on shore,

After this misfortune, it was impossible to proceed with the voyage, as the provisions on board the Hecla were sufficient to support the double crew only for a short period. That such an accident happened, said Parry, "will not excite surprise in the minds of those who are either personally acquainted with the true nature of this precarious navigation, or have had patience to follow me through the tedious and monotonous detail of our operations during seven successive summers. . . . The only cause for wonder has been our long exemption from such a catastrophe." This was the view taken of the case at the court-martial which was held upon Captain Hoppner for the loss of his ship. The conclusion of the sentence ran as follows:—"And the court, in justice to the services of Captain Parry, the officers, and ship's company of his Majesty's sloop Hecla, as well as those of Captain Hoppner, the officers, and ship's company of his Majesty's sloop Fury, to save his Majesty's ship Fury, cannot omit this opportunity of expressing the high opinion they entertain of their very distinguished exertions."

Few officers, if any, have ever sailed for service in the Arctic regions under circumstances more favourable than those which surrounded Parry when he departed on his second and third voyages. He was at the age when men are most capable of sustaining

* "Fury Beach" is often mentioned by later Arctic voyagers.

severe and prolonged exertion; he had had a considerable amount of experience within the Arctic circle; he had the very great advantage of being able to select his crews from men who had been tried, and whose capacities were known; and he had the good fortune to be appreciated by his superiors, who permitted him to do pretty well as he liked—to choose his own ships, to fit them out according to his will, and to adopt the routes which seemed to him to be the most promising. Notwithstanding all this, his second voyage was less successful than his first, and his third was a greater failure than either. But no person can rise from a careful perusal of the volumes which he published without being convinced that he did all that could have been expected from him, and that his comparative failures arose from incidents which it was beyond the power of man to control. In the Arctic regions, as elsewhere, the best men usually succeed better than their inferiors. Still there are exceptions to the general rule, and, bearing this in mind, it will be well not to indulge in too exalted anticipations regarding the expedition which is now away. It is quite possible that Captain Nares may not attain to so high a point as his predecessors in Smith Sound; but if he fails, or if he makes only a trifling advance upon those who have gone before him, we may be certain that he will have done all that is possible to attain success, and that the want of it will not discredit the flag which he and his subordinates have been selected to represent.

A VISIT TO SAMADEN, THE CAPITAL OF THE ENGADINE.

WE had passed through the beautiful valley in which Molines nestles, shut in by its rocks and snow peaks, and were rushing down the western slopes of the mountains which rise behind Samaden, through winding glades of pines, in an "extra-poste," a carriage furnished by mine host of Molines. Just below us lay Silvaplana, and beyond St. Moritz, with its famous baths—the villages looking like clusters of toys among the meadows beneath; and across the valley rose a wall-like range of mountains surmounted by the Spitz Bernina, 14,000 feet above the sea, with its sharp peak of purest white rising far into the blue sky.

Close to Silvaplana lie two lakes of that wonderful blue-green colour never seen in England; most lovely under bright sunlight. Soon we were changing horses in front of the principal inn at Silvaplana, and after passing through Celerino, we at length reached our destination, the Bernina-hof, at the farther end of the "High" Street of Samaden (truly deserving the title), and M. Franconi was bowing most politely, and explaining that owing to the number of his guests he could not accommodate us in the hotel itself, but had engaged rooms for us at the Banque des Grisons.

We had nothing for it but, having ascertained the dinner-hour, to turn our horses' heads and make our way down the narrow and ill-paved street, some of the houses set corner-wise to the road, as if ashamed of themselves under the gaze of so many "Inglesi," and trying to get into a shady corner, which indeed we were not sorry to do, in our quarters in the Banque des Grisons. A most peculiar and powerful

odour prevailed in the house, which we at length discovered to proceed from a manufactory of "Iva," close to the Banque, which is a kind of spirit produced from a plant possessing a smell like peppermint. One of our party so approved of it as to carry a small flask of it home, but to me it was decidedly unpleasant. Here we were very comfortable, and found the people extremely civil.

Samaden is a village of about 700 inhabitants, and ranks as the capital of the Engadine. The natives speak mostly a dialect known as "Romansch," though you hear German also. The principal street (in fact the only one) is long and irregular; about the middle rises the tall Campanile tower of the church, which is built in the same way as most of the churches in this part of Switzerland; the tower is surmounted by a cupola of metal, which gives a deep sonorous sound to the bell, which, echoed among the mountains, has a very fine effect. The villages around are chiefly Protestant, and there are scarcely any Papists, except the Bergamasque shepherds, who resort hither in summer. There is a neat little English church, erected on the green slope above the village, which will hold about 150 people.

While at Samaden, we resolved to make an excursion to the Rosegg Glacier, which is on the other side of the valley. We arranged, with some difficulty, for two vehicles to be at the hotel door about ten a.m., for there was such a demand for anything upon wheels, that our host warned us we could only have one carriage with springs, and that the rest of us would have to commit ourselves to one of the ordinary country hay-carts. We fondly imagined something picturesque, and though not luxurious exactly, still tolerably roomy. The next morning rose beautifully fine; ten o'clock came, also our "carriage." One had some small title to the name, but the other was really a curiosity, and would have created a sensation in Pall Mall. Two or three boards formed the body; a couple of ladders placed lengthwise were the sides; across these was placed a seat for two; a good stout horse between the shafts, and a native as driver, completed our turn-out.

The road across the valley is very flat, and for nearly a mile as straight as an arrow, white and dusty, and hot-looking. The River Inn, which we soon cross, is embanked here for some distance, owing to the flat meadows on each side; this, consequently, spoils the scenery, to some extent, but no doubt secures the crops of the worthy villagers from sudden risings of the stream.

We soon rattled through Pontresina, a pretty village about two miles, with two hotels, and beautiful views up the valley. Many English make this their head-quarters instead of Samaden, and I think, as it is much nearer the finest scenery, it is decidedly preferable. Here we turned off to the right across the river, and commenced to thread our way up the valley of the Rosegg Glacier, which gleamed in the distance like a sheet of silver, over what is called a "char-a-banc" road, which tried our vehicle considerably, and ourselves still more, convincing us in the most decided manner that we possessed more nerves than we had any idea of before. Our driver's idea was simply to drive straight forward, and not to attempt to avoid any obstacle, this evidently being in his mind derogatory to his dignity as our charioteer. The road soon became very narrow, being often a mere track through pines, which here

and there becoming more scattered, allowed you to catch a glimpse of some waterfall, or of the wall of rock which closed up the valley on each side.

At length the valley opened out a little, and after crossing a rickety wooden bridge, without a parapet, jolted first to one side and then to the other, at the imminent risk of a bath, we arrived at a chalet which marked the termination of our journey as far as wheels were concerned. Here, to our great relief, we got out and proceeded on foot towards the huge barrier of ice which filled the end of the valley. Soon we had left all vegetation behind, and were picking our way over stones and boulders of every size and shape, which, like the ruins of some huge castle, lay strewn over the ground, until we reached the moraine of the glacier. Just at the base of the moraine is a small hut, on the top of which lay a man dozing in the sun, who seemed a kind of guardian of the scene. He roused himself as we drew near, and offered his services as guide, which we politely but firmly declined. Three of our party clambered up the face of the moraine, and at length set foot on the glacier, but not having alpenstocks we did not go far.

After gazing at the magnificent spectacle for a short time, we retraced our steps to the spot where we had left one of our party who had not ventured farther than the base of the moraine. During our short absence a large stone, he said, had fallen close to him, illustrating one of the dangers of the Alps. These stones, poised on the edge of the moraine, lose their balance owing to the heat of the sun melting the ice beneath them, and topple over into the valley below.

We drove home at a most alarming pace over the char-road—

"We stopped not for stock and we stopped not for stone,"—

through Pontresina, scattering pedestrians right and left, till Samaden came in view, and we at length dismounted from our hay-cart at the bridge over the Inn. It may be that there was just a *souçon* of humour visible in the countenance of our driver, who had achieved this journey in an incredibly short space of time, at the expense of our nerves, but as he did not understand English, remonstrance was out of the question.

There are many beautiful walks about Samaden; one of the pleasantest is that over the green slopes above the village, through pine-forests, to the Val de Bever, celebrated for its wild flowers, fine air, and beautiful scenery. On the other hand, for tourists of more ambitious aims, there is the Piz Ôt, the Piz Langard, and other heights to be scaled, which will certainly repay for the difficulty of the ascent by the magnificent views obtained from the summits.

W. R. T.

ON SNAKES.

I.

IT is not surprising that the serpent should in all ages have been regarded with mingled feelings of fear and awe. Its peculiar form, its gliding, noiseless motion, its reputed power of fascination, its sudden dart and deadly bite, were elements well fitted to produce such a result. By many nations the serpent was regarded as the symbol of the evil principle in the world—it was in the form of this

"subtlest beast of the field" that the tempter of our race was said to have first approached man, and as such was worshipped by the Hindoos and other nations, who seem to have been ever more anxious to appease the evil than to please the good principle in the universe; and in the popular traditions of almost every Indo-European race there is a hero or demi-god, as Apollo, Hercules, Jason, Odin, and Krishna—chief incarnation of the Hindoo deity, Vishnu, who gained renown by the destruction of a monster serpent. The recent researches of ethnologists have brought to light traces of former serpent-worship in every quarter of the globe. Thus, in Ohio, North America, a remarkable symbolic earthwork, known as the great serpent-mound of Adam's County, is found, the convolutions of which extend to a length of one thousand feet, while a similar mound several hundred feet long has recently been described as occurring near Oban, in Argyllshire. The ancient Egyptian priests are said to have kept live serpents in their temples, and to have embalmed them after death. Nor is serpent-worship entirely extinct at the present day, as it still flourishes among certain negro tribes; while a few years ago a remarkable instance of the survival to the present day of this ancient form of worship was recorded as occurring in the centre of France.

In olden times the serpent was supposed to symbolise the most varied and diverse qualities. In Egypt it was the symbol of fertility, and with its tail in its mouth became "fit emblem of eternity;" while in Greece it represented wisdom and divination, discord and eloquence. Æsculapius, the god of medicine, was represented with a staff, on which a snake was coiled, in the one hand, while the other lay on the head of a snake, to symbolise the prudence and circumspection required in the followers of Æsculapius, a symbol still in use among physicians. Although the serpent thus figured largely in the mythology of the ancients, they seem to have regarded it with too much horror, or reverence, to attempt making any scientific acquaintance with it. In place of this, the most marvellous fables were invented regarding those creatures, which, getting embalmed in the classic literature of Greece and Rome, became equally fixed in the popular mind. Much of this ancient feeling regarding snakes remains to the present day, and it cannot be denied that the facts of the case as now known go far to justify this universal prejudice; for it has been truly said, that, next to man himself, the snake has been the greatest destroyer of human life. This repugnance, however, seems to be quite as strong in countries whose serpents are well-nigh harmless as in others where they slay their thousands annually. In the popular mind all snakes are more or less poisonous, while other reptiles, as lizards, frogs, toads, and newts, are regarded with the strongest suspicion; not one person in fifty would lift the harmless little frog in his hand, and still fewer would touch the toothless toad. Now, not one of these suspected creatures can do any one the slightest injury, while of the whole class of serpents, numbering, it is estimated, one thousand species, only two hundred are poisonous; and probably more than nine-tenths of all the fatal snake-bites are due to not more than a dozen species, inhabiting the hottest regions of the globe. It is the purpose of this paper to give some account of the serpents—both poisonous and non-poisonous—that figure most prominently in the several quarters of the globe.

In Great Britain there are but two snakes, while in the adjacent island of Ireland there are neither snakes nor reptiles of any kind, with the single exception of the sand-lizard. Popular tradition attributes the absence of these creatures from the Green Isle to the good offices of their patron saint, Patrick, who, according to the legend, drove them all into the sea. A more scientific explanation of the same phenomenon was advanced by the late Professor Edward Forbes, who held that reptiles, having come into Europe from the south-east, had gradually spread towards the north-west; that several species had already reached England when that convulsion happened which separated Britain from the continent, and thus prevented further reptilian migration in that direction. According to this ingenious theory, those "varmint," in their north-westerly progress, had not yet reached that part of the ancient continent now known as Ireland when the same convulsion brought the Irish Channel into existence, and thus cut off their highway. It is owing, probably, more to some such accident than to any inherent unsuitability of soil or climate that snakes are not found at the present day in Ireland. An attempt was made some years ago to introduce the ringed-snake, but as the natives on hearing of it offered a reward—as they now do in India—for the head of every snake found, the few that had been let loose were all captured before the experiment had got many weeks' trial. Of the two snakes found in Britain, the ringed-snake (*Natrix torquata*) is harmless. It is found abundantly in England, but rarely in Scotland, where, on the other hand, the viper, or adder (*Pelias berus*), the only poisonous reptile found in this country, is most abundant. The ringed-snake often attains a length of four feet, frequents hedgerows, heaths, and dunghills, but almost always in the neighbourhood of water, in which it swims readily. It feeds principally on frogs, and these often of a size enormously exceeding the apparent capacity of its mouth; but the bones of the upper and lower-jaws in serpents are not knit together as in other animals, but are merely connected by ligaments, and the jaws are thus capable of enormous distention, so that snakes may be said to open their mouths transversely, as well as vertically. Each side of the jaw can also move independently of the other; and thus, while the victim is held firmly by the teeth of the one side, the opposite side moves forward, and this alternate movement goes on till the animal is swallowed; but the immense gape of the serpent is chiefly owing to a long slender bone, which, going downwards and backwards, connects the two jaws together.



SKULL OF RATTLESNAKE.

Sometimes, however, the snake over-estimates its ability in this direction, and gets choked. Two cases of this kind have come under the writer's personal observation, in which the snakes, both very small, came to an untimely end through attempting to swallow an ordinary sized egg in the one case, and

a rat in the other. The frog is generally alive when it reaches the stomach of the ringed-snake; and Dr. Bell tells of an instance in which a young frog actually leapt forth from the open mouth of the snake, and of another in which he heard a poor Jonah of a frog plaintively croaking after it had been swallowed. The ringed-snake, like most reptiles, is oviparous, depositing from sixteen to twenty eggs at a time, all connected together by a glutinous cord, like a string of beads, and which are left to be hatched by the heat of the sun. This snake possesses no poison-fangs whatever, and is therefore perfectly harmless. It can also be readily tamed, and soon shows a preference for those who are kind to it. Like all other snakes, it casts its outer coating, or slough, several times a year. This is by no means the skin of the creature, as many suppose, but merely a glue-like exudation from the skin, which hardens and forms a transparent coating over every part of the body, including the eyes, which greatly need the protection thus afforded, as snakes are not provided with eyelids. When the creature is healthy, this slough splits in front of the head, the snake draws itself through between any two convenient obstacles, and the slough, turned by this operation inside out, is left behind, a perfect model of the creature it covered.

The adder, so called from a Saxon word meaning *neither or lower*, having reference to its lowly mode of locomotion, and more generally known as the viper—a contraction of *vivipar*, from the fact of bringing forth its young alive—rarely attains a length of more than two feet, and may readily be distinguished from its harmless neighbour by the markings on its skin. At the back of the head there is a black V-shaped mark, and along the back there is a chain of similarly-coloured spots. The head of the viper, and of the entire group of poisonous snakes to which it belongs, is broad, while the neck is distinctly marked off from it by abruptly narrowing, whereas in innocuous serpents the head and neck are of equal breadth, so that it is difficult to say where the one begins or the other ends. An examination of the viperine mouth, however, discloses the serious difference between our two indigenous snakes. The adder wants an entire row of teeth found in the upper jaw of the ringed-snake, but in their place, near the front of the mouth, it has several long teeth known as fangs, the foremost of which is in connection with a little poison-bag situated between the eye and the ear. These fangs are tubular, and down this tube, which has its exit a little way from the extremity of the fang, so as to allow of an exceedingly sharp point, the poison flows, whenever the fang has been sufficiently fixed. According to Dr. (now Sir William) Fayrer—the best authority on this subject—the poison does not usually come unless the snake actually presses its victim between its jaws; mere tearing or scratching with its fangs may take place without danger from the poison. The fangs situated behind the front one have, while in that position, no connection with the poison-gland, but should the front one get broken or otherwise destroyed—a thing which frequently happens—its place is taken by the next in succession. The viper of this country is by no means so deadly an animal as its allies of warmer climates, nor even as continental individuals of its own species. The strength and quantity of the poison depends largely on the temperature of the climate, being

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greatly increased by heat. Thus, it is very doubtful whether fatal results ever follow the bite of the British adder, and almost certain that such would not follow in the case of a previously healthy person.



KRISHNA CRUSHING THE HEAD OF COBRA (Indian Idol)

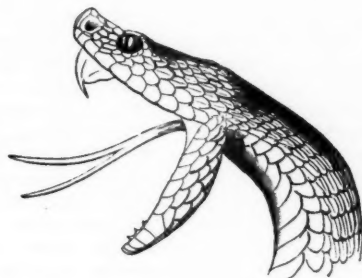
It is a very general belief that the sting of a poisonous snake is in its tongue, and to any one who has seen an adder ready for attack, with its body coiled, its neck and head reared aloft, and its long narrow tongue, split for a considerable distance from the point inwards, and thus resembling a two-pronged fork, vibrating rapidly, accompanied by a



RINGED-SNAKE.

loud hissing sound, the needle-like points of the bifid tongue have a decidedly stinging aspect. It need hardly be said that the tongue is only responsible for the hissing. The viper is fortunately not an aggressive animal, using its fangs against man

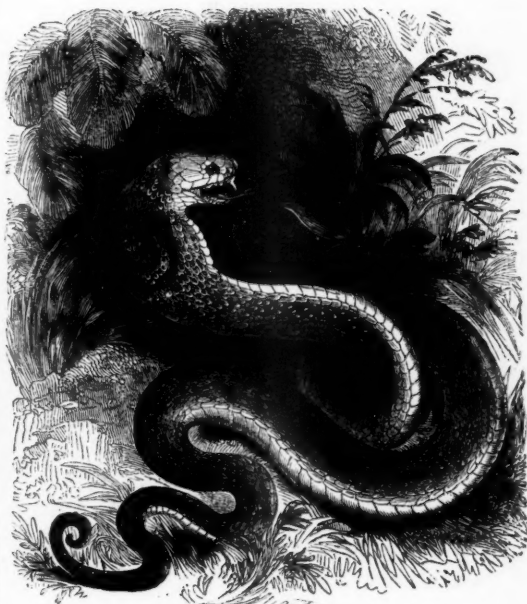
only when attacked by him; when not in use these weapons of its warfare lie along the gum enclosed in a fleshy covering. The poison supplying the fangs is a strictly limited quantity, and by biting several times in succession, the viper, or any other venomous snake, gradually exhausts its store, and becomes practically innocuous till more of the venom is secreted. No antidote has yet been discovered to



HEAD AND FANGS OF RATTLESNAKE.

the poison of this or any other poisonous snake, but strong stimulants, as liquid ammonia and brandy, are useful in counteracting to a certain extent the paralyzing influence of the virus. Vigorous sucking of the wound, especially when resorted to instantly, may in the case of the less deadly species greatly lessen, if not remove, the danger. In India, more painful operations are resorted to.

Much has been said and written of the fascination which poisonous serpents are supposed to exer-



COBRA DI CAPELLO.

cise over the smaller animals on which they prey. Thus, birds, it is alleged, have been seen to drop voluntarily into the snake's mouth, while frogs have

been observed courting destruction by hopping into the same living grave; but probably the bulk of such stories are mere fables. It seems, however, that the almost instinctive repugnance of the human race to these creatures is pretty generally shared by the lower animals, although it may be got over both by man and beast. The writer once kept two live vipers, sent him from the North of Scotland, and wishing to induce them to eat, two live mice were placed in their glass house beside them. No sooner were they introduced than the mice showed the most palpable signs of distress, retreating to the farthest corner of their prison, their bodies trembling as if palsied, and uttering the most lamentable squeaks. The snakes, however, were too much engrossed in their own woes to take any notice of them. The tiny rodents were not slow to observe this, and in a few days their contempt for the objects of their former dread was shown by the familiar way in which they would run along the bodies of the snakes, with an occasional stare into the reptilian faces, as if to satisfy themselves that they were making fun of harmless specimens. The snakes continued to live for nearly four months, dying at last of self-imposed starvation.

Like other reptiles, vipers, towards the end of autumn, prepare to retire into winter quarters; several individuals having secured a retreat, coil themselves round each other, and thus lie dormant till the advent of spring rouses them to renewed activity. Before hibernating, as this is called, they are usually fat, and by the gradual consumption of this fat in their system the necessary amount of vital action is carried on. It is probable that the snake which bit the servant of the Apostle Paul in the island of Malta, and which had been gathered along with some sticks for the purpose of kindling a fire, was, when gathered, in this dormant condition, and had only revived on the application of heat. The viper, unlike the ringed-snake, does not deposit its eggs. These remain in the female until the young are fully formed, when the enclosing membrane, corresponding to the shell of a bird's egg, bursts, and the young vipers, from fifteen to twenty in number, come forth alive, completely equipped with the instincts and weapons of their kind. Frank Buckland tells of a gentleman in Sussex who, coming upon a newly-killed viper on the roadside, found it filled with eggs. With his penknife he opened one of these, when the little unborn viper at once showed its instinct by rearing its head and assuming an attitude of defiance. The viper and the ringed-snake are among the most northerly forms of reptiles, and these do not extend much beyond the latitude of the North of Scotland. Snakes are thus essentially inhabitants of the warmer regions of the globe. On the continent of Europe both of our native species occur. The viper, however, disappears in the south-west, and its place is taken by the asp—not the snake that bit Cleopatra; nor is the viper found in the south-east of Europe, its place being there occupied by an allied species known as the ammodyte. These are all the poisonous snakes of Europe, while there are at least twelve species which resemble the ringed-snake in being innocuous. Of these the Æsculapean snake, found at Rome, attains a length of five feet, and was probably the serpent used by the ancient Romans as their symbol of the god of medicine.

Of Asiatic serpents, the best known and most

deadly are those of India; and regarding them, thanks to English administration and enlightenment, almost as much is known as of the snakes of our own country. Thus it is known from official statistics that in a certain district of Bengal, containing a population equal to that of Ireland, about 1,000 persons die every year from snake-bite; and it is estimated that in the entire peninsula of India, at least 20,000 persons perish annually from this cause. This terrible mortality has led the Indian government to institute inquiries as to the kind of snakes inflicting the death-wounds in those cases, and in certain districts the local authorities have offered a small reward for every such snake killed. In one locality, where at first a reward of four annas was offered for each snake, nearly 2,000 were killed. The reward was then reduced to one-half, with the result that only eight were brought to the authorities during a similar length of time, the natives refusing to risk their lives for two annas. In another district, where a reward of four annas was offered, "no less than 26,000," says Dr. Fayerer, "were brought and decapitated before the magistrate." There is much popular prejudice against this destruction of poisonous snakes, especially in the case of the cobra. So deadly is its venom, that the superstitious natives, attributing to it supernatural powers of evil, hope more from propitiating than from slaying it; so that only low-caste Hindoos can be induced to undertake this work, and those probably only on account of their extreme poverty. "Many Hindoos," says the authority already quoted, "object to destroy the cobra, and if they find it in their houses—as sometimes is the case when one has taken up its abode in a hole or crevice in the wall for years—it is propitiated and conciliated, fed and protected, as though to injure it were to invoke misfortune on the house and family. Should fear, and perhaps the death of some inmate, bitten by accident, prove stronger than superstition, it may be caught, tenderly handled, and deported to some field, where it is released and allowed to depart in peace, not killed." In the greater number of fatal cases of snake-bite in India, the species of serpent inflicting the wound is unknown, but of those in which it is known the cobra is credited with the largest number. It is found in all parts of India, from Ceylon to the southern slopes of the Himalayas, where it has been taken at a height of 8,000 feet. It attains a length of six feet, and, when moving about in search of prey, or still more when about to attack, its attitude is well fitted to strike terror into the timid Hindoo. Raising the anterior third of its body aloft, it distends its neck into a broad hood; its eyes glare with rage; it protrudes its unceasingly vibrating, bifid tongue, and, hissing loudly, prepares to dart. It is, however, by no means aggressive, apparently fearing man's presence quite as much as man fears that of it; but from the places where it lurks—old ruins, holes in walls, under logs of wood, and in outhouses—it is peculiarly liable to be unknowingly touched or trampled upon, and then often gives a death-bite before it has been perceived by its hapless victim. The gland containing the poison of the cobra is about as large as an almond, and the fangs are very long. The wound is consequently deep, and the poison is thus carried with almost hopeless certainty into the system. The cobra is a favourite with the snake charmers of India, who pretend, by means of certain spells and incantations, to obtain such influence over

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it, that it can be handled by them with impunity, and be made to perform certain graceful evolutions to the sound of music. Undoubtedly those snake-charmers show great dexterity and firmness of nerve in catching and handling poisonous snakes; but it has been repeatedly proved that the cobras with which they perform have been deprived sometimes of the front fang, which alone can poison; but more usually of all the fangs, and sometimes even of the entire poison apparatus, poison-bag included, so that the snake is rendered harmless for life. When only the front fang is removed, in a few days the fang immediately behind takes its place, and so requires removal. In the case of the echis, a poisonous little snake, it has been known to get refurnished with fangs, firmly knit to the bone of the jaw, on the third day after the removal of the former ones. Those snake-charmers trade upon the superstitious fears of their less crafty fellows, who trust more to the spells of these impostors, as an antidote to cobra poison, than to the common-sense remedies of the English physician. The cobra is also known as the "spectacled snake," from the remarkable resemblance which the markings on the upper surface of its hooded neck bear to a pair of spectacles.

The hamadryad is another venomous snake, which, if as numerous in individuals as the cobra, would certainly be the most destructive to human life of all Indian serpents. It is hooded like the cobra, and attains a length of twelve to fourteen feet. Unlike almost all other serpents, it is aggressive towards man. Dr. Fayer was told by an intelligent Burman that a friend of his one day stumbled upon a nest of these serpents, and immediately retreated. This homage on the part of the man would have satisfied the *amour propre* of a cobra; not so the hamadryad. The old female gave chase, "the man fled with all speed over hill and dale, dingle and glade, and terror seemed to add wings to his flight, till, reaching a small river, he plunged in, hoping he had then escaped his fiery enemy. But lo! on reaching the opposite bank, up reared the furious hamadryad, its dilated eyes glistening with rage, ready to bury its fangs in his trembling body. In utter despair he bethought himself of his turban, and, in a moment, dashed it upon the serpent, which darted upon it like lightning, and for some moments wreaked its vengeance in furious bites, after which it returned quietly to its former haunts."

ANTIQUARIAN GOSSIP ON THE MONTHS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BRITISH POPULAR CUSTOMS, PAST AND PRESENT."

July.

THE extreme heat of this month gave rise to a very curious superstition among the Romans, who believed that the various diseases resulting from it were in some way connected with the rising and setting of Sirius, or the dog-star, in coincidence with the sun. Consequently, the name of "Dog Days" was given by them to the period between the 3rd of July and the 11th of August. It is obvious, however, that this notion was utterly groundless, for not only does the star vary in its rising in every one year as the latitude varies, but, as Mr. Hutton has pointed out, it is always later and later every year in all latitudes, so that in time the star may, by the same rule, come to be charged with bringing frost and

snow.* It is to Egypt, most probably, that the superstition connected with these days is to be attributed. "As the star," says Soane,† "had its heliacal rising much about the time of the summer solstice, when the Nile also began to rise, the ancient Egyptians imagined that it in some way influenced the overflow of the waters and the consequent fertility of the soil. It was, therefore, worshipped by them as something holy, and often under the names of Isis and Thoth, the usual appellations of their great goddess, and of Mercury. According to the Roman belief, at the rising of Sirius the seas boil, the wines ferment in the cellars, and standing waters are set in motion; the dogs also go mad, and the silurus, or sturgeon, is blasted."‡ The term *Dog-days* still continues to be a common phrase, and it is difficult to say whether it is from superstitious adherence to old custom, or from a belief of the injurious and hurtful effect of heat upon the canine race, that the magistrates, often unwisely, at this season of the year, order dogs to be muzzled or tied up.

Formerly, the first Friday in July was observed in Essex as "Fairlop Oak Festival." It seems that in Hainault Forest there was an oak of enormous size, and popularly known in all parts as the Fairlop Oak. It is said to have been in circumference thirty-six feet, and to have had as many as seventeen branches, each as large as any ordinary tree of its species. In the year 1805 a great part of it was destroyed by fire. A correspondent of the "Book of Days" (vol. ii. p. 21), speaking of this remarkable tree and the festival connected with it, says, "Far back in the last century there lived an estimable block and pump-maker in Wapping, Daniel Day by name, but generally known by the quaint appellation of *Good Day*.§ Haunting a small rural retreat, which he had acquired in Essex, not far from Fairlop, Mr. Day became deeply interested in the tree above described, and began a practice of resorting to it on the first Friday in July in order to eat a rustic dinner with a few friends under its branches. His dinner was composed of beans and bacon, which he never changed, and which no guest ever complained of. By-and-by, the neighbours caught Mr. Day's spirit, and came in multitudes to join in his festivities. As a necessary consequence, trafficking people came to sell refreshments on the spot; afterwards commerce in hard and soft wares found its way thither; shows and tumbling followed, and in short, a regular fair was at last concentrated around the tree."

In days gone by, a festival, called "Bodmin Riding," was kept in Cornwall on the Sunday and Monday after St. Thomas à Becket's Day (July 7th). A puncheon of beer having been brewed in the preceding October,|| and bottled in anticipation of the time, two or more young men, who were intrusted with the chief management of the affair, went round the town accompanied with a band of drums and fifes, or other instruments. The crier, we are told, saluted each house with the following words, "To the people of this house a prosperous morning, long

* See Sir Thomas Browne's Works (Bohn's edition), vol. I. p. 446.

† "Book of the Months."

‡ In an old calendar quoted by Bede (*De Temporum Ratione*), the dog-days are said to begin on the 14th of July; and in one prefixed to the Common Prayer, in the time of Elizabeth, they are made to begin on the 6th of July, and to end on the 6th of September; this last continued till the Restoration, when the *Dog-days* were omitted.

§ See "Fairlop and its Founder," printed at Totnam, 1847.

|| Parochial History of Cornwall," 1893, vol. I. p. 104. Murray's "Handbook for Cornwall," 1865, p. 244.

life, and a merry riding." The musicians then struck up the riding tune, and the householder was solicited to taste the riding ale, which was carried round in baskets. Usually, it seems, a bottle was taken in, and a certain sum given in exchange for it, to be spent on the festivities of the season. The following morning a procession was formed, which proceeded first to the Priory to receive two large garlands of flowers fixed on staves, and then through the principal streets to the town end, where the games were formally opened. The sports lasted two days, and consisted of jumping in sacks, wrestling, etc. At this festival, it should be added, there was held a curious kind of mock trial. A lord of misrule was appointed, before whom any unpopular person so unlucky as to be captured was dragged to answer some mock charge.

At one time there existed at Wolverhampton, on July 9th, an annual procession of men in antique armour. According to tradition, the custom took its rise when Wolverhampton was a great emporium of wool, and resorted to by merchants from all parts of England. The necessity, at such a time, of an armed force to keep peace, is not altogether improbable.

St. Swithin's Day (July 15th) is chiefly noted for the weather lore connected with it, the popular superstition being that, according as it is wet or dry on this day, so there will be a corresponding season of rain or fair weather for the forty days ensuing. In some church books we find entries of gatherings of "Saint Swithine's Farthyngs" on this day. Thus, in the parish accounts of Kingston-upon-Thames, in 1508, we find the following: "23 Hen. vii Imprimis, at Easter, for any householder keyping a brode gate, shall pay to the parochie prests, wages 3d. Item, to the paschall $\frac{1}{2}$ d. To St. Swithin $\frac{1}{2}$ d." Churchill, alluding to this day, says:—

"July, to whom the Dog-star in her train
St. James gives oysters, and St. Swithin rain."

At Clent, in the parish of Hales Owen, Worcester-shire, a fair, says Brand, was formerly held. It arose, probably, from the gathering together of persons to visit the shrine of St. Kenelm, on the feast of the Saint (July 17th). On the Sunday next after this fair, St. Kenelm's wake was held, at which a quaint and curious custom was practised, called "Crabbing the Parson." It is said to have originated from what, once on a time, happened to a priest at Frankley. Having helped himself, without leave, to dumplings at a farmhouse, the dame's husband gave chase, and at once began pelting the unfortunate parson with crabs, a store of which he had gathered, in order to foment, on his return, the sprained leg of his horse. So well, we are told, did the bombardment take effect, that the priest took to his heels, amid the jeers of the old dame, and the amusement as well as laughter of the few persons who were in attendance. In commemoration of this event, says the legend, the custom of "crabbing the parson" originated. The story probably represents the ill-will often engendered in times before tithes were commuted.

On St. James's Day (July 25th) it is customary to begin eating oysters. It is a vulgar superstition that "whoever eats oysters on St. James's Day will never want money." This does not, however, agree with another popular notion, in Butler's "Dyet's Dry Dinner," 1599: "It is unseasonable and unwholesome in all months that have not an *r* in their name,

to eat an oyster." In some parts of Herefordshire, the labourers, speaking of the certainty or uncertainty of a good crop of hops, are wont to say:—

"Till St. James's Day is past and gone,
There may be hops or there may be none."

Apples were formerly on this day blessed by the priest. There is a special form for blessing them contained in the Manual of the Church of Sarum. In London and other places, the children of the poorer class have a custom at this season of collecting together the oyster-shells which have been thrown away from fish-shops, and of building with them grottoes. By the time that Old St. James's Day (August 5th) comes round, these little fabrics are completed, and at night are lighted up by a candle placed inside. Accordingly, as each person passes by, he is assailed by a crowd of little boys and girls, entreating him to contribute, by cries of "Pray remember the grotto." Mr. Thoms,* in reference to this pretty custom, is of opinion that in the grotto thus made we have a memorial of the world-renowned shrine of St. James, at Compostella, which may have been formerly erected on the anniversary of St. James by poor persons, as an invitation to the pious, who could not visit Compostella, to show their reverence to the saint by alms-giving to their needy brethren. There is no doubt that the saint and the oyster-shell have been long in close connection. "The escalop," says Hampson,† "which bears his name, is of frequent recurrence as a bearing in coat-armour, where it is generally understood to be a memorial of former pilgrimage, performed by one who had worn the shell as a badge of his profession, or in token of the accomplishment of his vows." In the old ballad of the "Friar of Orders Grey," the lady describes her lover as clad, like herself, in "a pilgrim's weedes":—

"And how should I know your true love
From many another one?
Only his scallop, shell, and hat,
And by his sandal shoon."

The 25th of July was also dedicated to St. Christopher, whose picture, according to Erasmus, was commonly believed to have the power of preserving its owner from a violent death. The following distich was consequently generally written under the saint's portrait:—

"Christophori sancti faciem quicumque tuetur,
Illo nempe die non morte mala morietur."

The first Monday after St. Anne's Day, July 26th, a feast was formerly held at Newbury, in Berkshire, the principal dishes on the occasion being beans and bacon. In the course of the day a procession took place, when a cabbage stuck on a pole was carried instead of a mace, accompanied, says Hone, by similar substitutes for other emblems of civic dignity.

RINKS AND SKATES.

BY CUTHBERT BEDE.

SKATING-RINKS are now so popular, not only in the metropolis, and in the cities and fashionable watering-places of the United Kingdom, but

* "Notes and Queries," 1st Series, vol. i. p. 6.
† *Medii Evi Kalendarium*, vol. i. p. 325.

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also in our provincial towns, that scarcely a week passes without some addition to their already large number being chronicled in the newspapers. Every one seems to be anxious to get upon wheels. Bicycles and tricycles have had, and still continue to have, their large measure of public patronage; and now the smaller wheels, under skates, have come into vogue; and representatives of all ranks in society go rolling round rinks, in a way that should suggest to the editor of a new edition of Mr. J. O. Halliwell's historical work, "The Nursery Rhymes of England," a fresh version of that "charm," showing how "Robert Rowley rolled a round *rink* round." And, in fact, the alliteration being alluring, a song-writer, in one of the shilling magazines this spring, made the chorus of his song to conclude with the line, "O, the rosy rinkers rolling round the *rink*." By the way, on the 16th day of that same month of March, there seemed something like the shadow of Nemesis in the fact that a case concerning roller-skates was appropriately brought before the Master of the Rolls, who heard what was to be said concerning the respective patents of Mr. Plimpton and Mr. Spiller, whose interests were represented by five q.c.'s and three barristers; but, if it is correct that half the proceeds of each rink on which a certain roller-skate is used goes to the patentee, then it is sufficiently obvious that any infringement of a successful patent would involve serious pecuniary considerations. The patentees of roller-skates, as well as the proprietors of, or shareholders in, skating-rinks, must, as Mr. J. R. Planché said, in "Mount Parnassus," accept their fortune, "come *wheel*, come woe;" and the woe not unfrequently is extended to those rinkers who venture upon the artificial ice before they have had sufficient practice with the roller-skates. Hence they very speedily "come to grief," and results follow such as those depicted in Mr. Charles Keene's sketch in "Punch" of "The Prevailing Epidemic," where Paterfamilias replies dismally to Uncle John, who has called to ask the young people to dine and spend the evening "Well, we're rather a sick house! Fact is, we've been rinking a good deal lately. Matilda has damaged her knee-cap; Grace has got a black eye, and lost some of her teeth; George has sprained his wrist; and Fred's in bed with a comminuted fract—" Here Paterfamilias is interrupted by the servant showing in "Dr. Splinter!" It seems clear that, until sufficient rink practice can be obtained, roller-skates may be productive of numerous accidents; although one patentee (Mr. George Keel) states, as a leading merit of his "automaton" invention, that "every evolution can be performed with delightful ease, combined with the desirable advantage of perfect safety." Skilled skaters may, doubtless, find this statement to be correct; but how about those rinkers who put on roller-skates for the first time with the expectation that "every evolution" will be performed with ease and safety?

There is nothing new under the sun; and, after all the talk and fuss that has been made about them, roller-skates are not a novelty of the past twelve months. They were introduced into England several years since; and the only wonder is that they were allowed to be relegated to the limbo of forgetfulness for more than a decade of years, and then, all at once, to be thrust to the height of popularity, and to achieve a wide-spread success in a very few months. Corn-exchanges, circuses, amphitheatres, bazaars,

music pavilions, riding-schools, are suddenly transformed into skating-rinks, laid with prepared floorings of asphalt, concrete, or artificial ice, the scenes upon which furnish fruitful subjects for the pencils of Messrs. Tenniel, Du Maurier, Keene, Thompson, Sambourne, and the other artists of our humorous and illustrated papers. The press and the periodicals take up the theme; the stage and the concert-room are affected by this popular outbreak; and, in short, there is a regular rinkomania.

I have mentioned some artists who have delineated the scenes suggested by the use of roller-skates in the present year. I do not know if Mr. George Cruikshank has touched the subject, though "great George, our king" of the etching-needle, is still with us, vigorous and humorous to the last. But, in his "Comic Almanack" for the year 1844—in which, by the way, one of the plates was a caricature on Father Matthew and the teetotalers—he had an etching entitled, "A new Art-if-ice. Doubly Hazardous." It represented, in the upper portion, a floor of artificial ice, on which were seven gentlemen skaters, the wall of the room being painted to represent a mountain scene in winter. The ice has given way in the centre, and three of the skaters are falling through the hole, while an attendant hastens to their rescue with a ladder. The cause of the fracture is shown, in the lower portion of the sketch, to be from the heat of the chandelier that lights the room below, in which is a gaming-table, surrounded by players, some of whom are taking advantage of the accident, and the confusion to which it has given rise, to scramble for the money that lies upon the table. The wall decorations of the room are palm-trees and volcanoes in eruption. The letterpress to this etching is a "Report of the Royal Humane Society for the Prevention of Accidents on Artificial Ice;" but I fancy that such artificial ice was not "an accomplished fact," but was as much *in nubibus* as "The Aerial Building Company," a prospectus for which was given in the same "Comic Almanack." It may be remembered that, in the spring of the previous year, Henson's Aerial Steam Carriage had excited a great deal of attention and controversy, and had suggested various amusing subjects to the comic artists of the day. But it is to be noted that George Cruikshank, in the etching to which I have referred, has represented his skaters as making their evolutions on the ordinary ice-skates, and not on roller, or wheel-skates.

It is, I think, twenty-seven years since the wheel-skates were first introduced in the great world of London. At any rate, I know of no earlier public exhibition of a performance on wheel-skates than in the season of 1849, when there was produced, at Her Majesty's Theatre, London, the ballet of "Les Plaisirs de l'Hiver," which created a sensation rarely equalled, and the chief scene in which depended for its success upon the use of wheel-skates. The stage was so arranged as to represent, with marvellous realism, an ice-bound lake in a Hungarian landscape. Mists—skilfully simulated by strips of gauze—partially obscured the scene; these mists gradually dispersed, and sunlight irradiated the snow-covered hills and trees and ice-bound lake; gliding upon which came a throng of skaters, dressed in the prettiest Hungarian costume; the whole of the "dancing" and figures in this ballet being executed on skates, which were so ingeniously constructed that they cheated the spectators' eyes, for

their mechanism was concealed from view, and the wheels were not visible as in the roller-skates of 1876. But although these theatrical skates of 1849 made so great a sensation in the world of fashion, no speculative individual appears to have taken the hint to adopt them for public use, with wheels either visible or invisible; and skating-rinks, although so popular in Canada, would seem to have been looked upon as a peculiarly American institution, that would not meet with success if brought across the Atlantic and transplanted to English soil. In 1851 some skating waitresses, dressed in fancy costumes, and moving on wheel-skates, were introduced into the beerhouses of Berlin, as an additional attraction to the soldiers, students, and other frequenters of the *Kneipe*.

But although the hint of a skate-boot, working upon rollers, had thus been so publicly given on either side the Atlantic, as well as upon the London operatic stage, it was some time before it was turned to any practical use in England; and the first patent for "floor-skates" was taken out by Messrs. Munn and Cobb, 8, Gresham Street, London, on September 20th, 1860. These skates were fitted with straps, as in the ordinary ice-skates, and also with four wheels, each working singly under the middle of the skate. As a patent flooring of concrete, asphalt, or other material, was not then anticipated for their use, they were adapted to run along the ordinary wooden floor, or upon a carpet; and they were specially recommended for the use of young ladies and children, as putting them in possession of a delightful home amusement, and also teaching them the rudiments of ice-skating. These floor-skates were made of various lengths, beginning at seven inches long, price eight shillings. They do not appear to have come into general use, or to have hit the public fancy as surely and quickly as was afterwards done by croquet, lawn tennis, and rink-skating. Nevertheless, the idea had taken hold on a certain section of the public; and during the next six years various "skating-halls" were opened in different parts of the metropolis. From the fact of my having written "a copy of verses" on one of these halls, I can call to mind the circumstance that its enterprising proprietor advertised it as being supplied with "the glualicious flooring"—an adjective which is commended to the notice of the interrogator of a spelling bee. I wonder what "glualicious" really means, and from what language the word is derived? and who are the ingenious persons who invent such words, and others of classical coinage, to meet the necessities of advertisers? This is a by-path in the regions of literature that might be curiously followed out.

To return to the roller-skates. By the end of the six years after that first patent had been taken out, they had gradually risen in popularity, and I might also add, in the respectability of their surroundings. In December, 1867, the Floral Hall, Covent Garden, was opened as a skating-hall—the term "rink" not being yet transferred from Canada to England; artificial ice was laid down, over which the throng of skaters glided on roller-skates. At certain hours in the day, Mlle. Frederica and Mr. Elliott gave their performances at the Floral Hall; and, by thus demonstrating what could be achieved by roller-skates on an artificial flooring, greatly popularised the amusement. Similar performances have been given at the Alexandra Palace, and elsewhere in London.

The chief scene in that piece, "*Les Plaisirs de l'Hiver*," was the celebrated *Pas de Patineurs*; which reminds us that the French word *patin* is used for a skate. Throughout the greater part of England, the patten is that shoe, or clog, mounted on a hoop of iron, which the poet Gay designated as a "female implement," when (in 1712) he invoked the muse, in his "*Trivia*," to sing "the patten's praise," and gave a very fanciful etymology for the derivation of the word in a romantic narrative of a love-stricken Lincolnshire blacksmith making "a new machine" to keep a lovely maiden from taking fresh cold by getting her feet wet in the muddy lanes. The name of "the pale virgin" was Patty, and the "machine," in her honour, was called the patten:—

"The Patten now supports each frugal dame,
Which, from the blue-eyed Patty, takes the name."

In 1730, William Hutton, who was afterwards the celebrated Birmingham bookseller and historian, was so small for his age of seven years, that he had to stand on a pair of pattens when he worked at the Derby silk-mill. Sir John Dinely, the eccentric Poor Knight of Windsor, was wont to walk the streets in pattens in wet weather; similar in size to those worn by Mrs. Gamp. The manufacture of these useful articles employed a few years since many hundreds of people in London alone, where there were no less than twenty-eight tradesmen who were patten-makers, with many workpeople under them; and, therefore, Mr. Charles Knight was mistaken when he wrote, "the patten is gone," and classed it among his "*Items of the Obsolete*," in "*Once upon a Time*." The Worshipful Company of Patten-makers have their head-quarters at the Guildhall, London.

Returning from patten to *patin*, and rejecting Gay's etymology, we see how both words represent something that is under foot, whether that something be Mrs. Gamp's pattens, or the wooden pattens used in a Turkish bath, or the skate. For the French *patin*, the Danish *patine*, and the Italian *pattini* may be traced back to the Greek *pateo* and *patos* (*πατέω πατος*). And, from hence, "patten" came to mean the foot-stall, or base, of a column, and the sole or sill of a wooden partition; and, in its sense of that which is under foot, like a pavement, we have the authority of Shakespeare, where Lorenzo so prettily bids Jessica to "look how the floor of heaven is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold." Mr. Collier proposed to read "pattens" instead of "patines," but, with all due deference to his erudition, I think that Shakespeare showed himself to be the better scholar by writing "patines." But if, in France, a skate is called *patin*, it is called patten in East Anglia. The fen-men in Lincolnshire and Huntingdonshire, even at the present day, when Whittlesea Mere and many fens exist but in name, invariably speak of their skates as "pattens." A fen-man would seem to be born a skater, and to ask for his pattens as naturally as he would cry for his first food. If the little boys in Pekin are adepts in skating, the fen-boys of England can rival them; and although a fen-woman may not often skate to market with her poultry and butter poised on her head, yet a fen-man has frequently done so, just as if he had been "to the manner born" in Rotterdam, Antwerp, Dordrecht, Haarlem, Utrecht, or Moerdijk, instead of having been reared within sight of the spires, towers, and "stump" of

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Whittlesea, Ely, Crowland, Wisbeach, or Boston. But, in grace of posture, a native of our English Holland surpasses the real Dutchman, who leans too forward for his run upon the ice, while a fen-man—after he has got over his first start, in which he, too, bends his head forward, and swings his arms wildly—dashes along with upright body, legs and arms kept down, and the work done chiefly from the hips. In pace, too, he can beat the Dutchman, and can accomplish his mile in three and a half minutes. When putting on a spurt, he can go at the rate of a mile in two minutes, if the wind and ice are in his favour; and although W., or "Turkey," Smart, of Welney, who was the "patten" champion for so many years, failed to win his wager of skating a mile in two minutes, he succeeded in doing the mile in two seconds over the stipulated time. John Gittan, of Nordelf, skated the mile in two minutes and twenty-nine seconds. It is, however, to be noted that they were allowed to start from a certain point that should enable them to attain full speed as they passed the starting-post, and that the reckoning of the distance and the time then commenced. When in full swing, J. Wiles, of Welney, who was another "patten" champion, would take fifteen yards in one stride.

Both in London and Edinburgh ice-skating has been brought to a perfection that would rank it as an art; and for this, the superiority of the English skates over those used at St. Petersburg, Stockholm, and Montreal, has had much to do with the result. Comparatively speaking, skating on iron-shod skates is a modern invention, for its history would appear to be within the past two hundred years, and to date to the great frost of the year 1662, when Evelyn witnessed this new form of skating on the canal in St. James's Park. The skates that had been previously used on the London waters were those mentioned by Stow, and were very primitive affairs, being merely pieces of bone tied under the feet, the skater having chiefly to depend upon the use of a spiked staff to steady himself, as well as to "urge on his wild career." If space allowed we might refer to many passages in our literature descriptive of skating. Some of my classical readers may also remember a clever Latin poem in the once famous "Muse Etonenses." After two centuries of popularity, we cannot expect that the ice-skates can altogether be ousted by the roller-skates from their hold in the public esteem, nor is it desirable that they should be so.

Varieties.

DENTISTS.—We have received the following communication from one of the most distinguished members of the profession, and one who has always taken a great interest in dental education:—"I wish to make a few remarks on the paragraphs quoted from certain letters, in the May part of the 'Leisure Hour,' p. 352. Your first correspondent is probably a fully-qualified medical man, as I consider every dentist ought to be; for the practice of dental disease is by no means limited to manipulative skill, as too many suppose. Dentists ought to be fully-educated surgeons, having had the usual course of medical training. The teeth are in as intimate relation with the body generally as the ear or eye, and can only be treated rationally upon the knowledge of such relation. The Oculist and Aurist are qualified practitioners; the Dentist should be so also. Those who treat the teeth without surgical knowledge only arrest disease when it has occurred, instead of preventing the constitutional causes which give rise to it.

"The Licentiate'ship in dental surgery, of which another writer makes mention, is a degree which was granted by the College of Surgeons at a time (twenty years ago) when it would have been impossible to make every man become a full member of that body. It has doubtless done good in its time, but those who desire dental surgery to take its true position as a branch of general medicine, trust that this minor and imperfect certificate may only be granted to those who have first obtained a regular surgical diploma, and be supplementary to it. This is the more necessary in the present day as dangerous anesthetics are so frequently used in special practice, and should never be administered but by a medical practitioner.

"Finally, it may not be generally known that our claims to a scientific position are by no means unimportant, inasmuch as no less than four gentlemen practising dental surgery are Fellows of the Royal Society, whilst many of them have taken the highest honours in medicine and in surgery.

"With regard to generosity, dentists are certainly not behind their medical brethren. Independent of time devoted to the poor at various hospitals, many a poor governess, and clergyman without a benefice, has come to those best known in the profession for aid, and been treated, without fee, as carefully as the richest patients."

The opinions of our correspondent are those of the best qualified men in the profession, and we gladly endorse them. Dentists will take their proper place when they can point to the regular diploma of the College of Surgeons, as guaranteeing physiological knowledge, while the supplemental dental diploma or certificate will attest special knowledge and skill. It rests with the public to make proper inquiry before committing themselves to the hands of such tradesmen as are referred to in our previous number (*Leisure Hour* for May).

MERCHANDISE OF SOULS.—The Bishop of Peterborough, in describing the abuses of the law of Church Patronage, added a statement of fact as to the working of those laws for which he could personally vouch. Since he had been a bishop he had been called upon to institute in that diocese four clergymen, of whom one was paralytic; another was so aged and infirm that, on the ground of his age and infirmity, he asked for leave of perpetual absence from the important parish to which he (the bishop) had just been compelled to institute him; a third was a reclaimed drunkard, who was presented to a benefice situated only a few miles from the scene of his former intemperance, where the scandal of it was, unhappily, notorious; the fourth—he could hardly bring himself to say it, but things had come to such a pass that he was resolved that there should be no further concealment—the fourth had resigned a public office that he had formerly held sooner than face an investigation into a charge of the most horrible immorality, the truth of which he did not dare to deny. In each of these cases the facts were perfectly well known to the respective patrons. As regarded every one of these he was legally advised that he had no power to refuse institution; and as regarded the last, it was simply the fact that the man to whom, at the risk and under the threat of a lawsuit, he refused institution, could the next day have bought, across a counter in London, with the same ease and with more secrecy than he could have bought a railway ticket, a cure of souls in the shape of a donative on which he might have at once entered without any human being having the right to ask him so much as a single question. For aught he knew to the contrary, he might have done this, and that miserable man, stained as he was by his numerous vices, might now be the benefited irremovable minister of a parish in the Church of England. Shocked at such facts as these, and knowing they were by no means solitary ones in the Church, he asked for a committee of the House of Lords to investigate the state of the law which allowed of it, he embodied in the Bill those reforms which this committee declared on evidence to be really necessary, and he was forthwith greeted with a cry of horror and condemnation, as if he had committed an act of sacrilege. As he cited the facts he had now narrated, he hardly knew which to be most ashamed of, that evils so scandalous, abuses so shameful, as those he had described should exist in the Church beneath the shelter of our laws, or that there should be clergymen and gentlemen capable of publicly defending them. . . . The principle of the Bill introduced by him was simply that patronage of all kinds was a sacred trust on behalf of the spiritual interests of the parishioners, that a patron was a person charged with the most solemn of responsibilities—the duty of selecting a fitting person for a most important public office, which was nothing less than the cure and government of the souls of the parishioners for whom he had to make this selection, and that whatever gain or advantage, direct or in-

direct, might originally be inherent in or might have attached themselves in course of time to this trusteeship, must be regarded as subordinate to this primary object of the trust, and that to neglect this duty of selection, still more to exercise it only with regard to his own private interest, and without regard to those of the parishioners, was nothing less than a deliberate and sinful breach of trust. Neither Church nor State had yet accepted the theory of patronage which had been recently propounded in certain quarters, that patronage acquired by money should, merely because it had been so acquired, be regarded as property pure and simple, and should be "free from all those restrictions which gave it the character of a trust."

HARVEST THANKSGIVING SERVICES.—Instead of varied and discordant local services, the custom in America is to keep one day throughout the whole commonwealth for a thanksgiving to the Almighty. Although there is no national church, a national recognition of religion is maintained by this and other public services being proclaimed by the President. The following is President Grant's proclamation for the last Thanksgiving day:—"In accordance with a practice at once wise and beautiful, we have been accustomed, as the year is drawing to a close, to devote an occasion to the humble expression of our thanks to Almighty God for the ceaseless and distinguished benefits bestowed upon us as a nation, and for His mercies and protection during the closing year. Amid the rich and free enjoyment of all our advantages we should not forget the source from whence they are derived, and the extent of our obligations to the Father of all mercies. We have full reason to renew our thanks to Almighty God for favours bestowed upon us during the past year. By His continuing mercy civil and religious liberty have been maintained, peace has reigned within our borders, labour and enterprise have produced their merited rewards, and to His watchful Providence we are indebted for security from pestilence and other national calamity. Apart from the national blessings, each individual among us has occasion to thoughtfully recall and devoutly recognise the favours and protection which he has enjoyed. Now, therefore, I, Ulysses S. Grant, President of the United States, do recommend that, on Thursday, the 25th day of November, the people of the United States, abstaining from all secular pursuits and from their accustomed avocations, do assemble in their respective places of worship, and, in such form as may seem most appropriate in their own hearts, offer to Almighty God their acknowledgments and thanks for all His mercies, and their humble prayers for a continuance of His divine favours. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed. Done at the city of Washington, this 27th day of October, in the year of our Lord 1875, and of the independence of the United States the one hundredth.—U. S. GRANT. By the President:—HAMILTON FISH, Secretary of State."

WILD BEAST MARKET.—The selling value of wild beasts varies very much. You must pay about £200 for a royal tiger, and £300 for an elephant, while I am informed you may possibly buy a lion for £70, and a lioness for less. But a first-rate lion sometimes runs to a high figure, say even £800. Orang-outangs come to £20 each, but Barbary apes range from £3 to £4 apiece. Mr. Jamrach, however, keeps no priced catalogue of animals, but will supply a written list of their cost if needed. He does not, moreover, "advertise," so much as royally "announce" his arrivals. Certain papers in London, Paris, Berlin, and Vienna, occasionally contain a bare statement that such and such beasts and birds are at "Jamrach's," no address being given. He has customers in all the Zoological Museums in Europe, and the Sultan has been one of the largest buyers of his tigers and parrots.—*East London, by Rev. Harry Jones.*

CHIVALRY AND RUFFIANISM.—In criticising Mr. Pettie's clever picture of "The Threat," in the Royal Academy Exhibition (1876), Mr. G. A. Sala has some plain and characteristic remarks about the "days of chivalry," so-called. The "threat" is being uttered by a knight, belted, helmed—he has his beaver up—harsh-featured, and tawny-moustached, whose brows lower, whose eyes glare, one of whose fists is clenched in rage while the other rests on his sword-hilt. The clenched fist is extended towards the spectator, and, with the armour-clad limb to which it belongs, seems positively to protrude from the frame, so admirably is it foreshortened. Not the less worthy of applause is the swing and balance of the whole figure, which is a three-quarter length; while the execution is on a par with the rude, swashbuckling, brawling fellow on the canvas. In the very title given to this work there is shrewdness and appropriateness. The man in armour is not uttering a "menace," or a "defi-

ance," or a "gag" of battle. He is simply threatening to do somebody mischief; and but for the tact and skill of Mr. Pettie in halting just on this side exaggeration and caricature, this minatory mediæval personage might be mistaken for an excited Life Guardsman threatening to "punch the head" of some insolent civilian foe. As it is, the picture keeps by a hair's breadth within the bounds of that perfectly untrustworthy tradition which supposes that the belted knights of the "days of chivalry" were, in any manner or sense, chivalrous, courteous, or high-minded. Cervantes is said to have laughed Spain's chivalry away; but a good course of Taine and Thierry, of Freeman and Wright, will enable the scholar to study the chivalrous delusion out of his head, and will exhibit to him in their proper colours all the heroes of Froissart and Monstrelet—will exhibit them as just such brawling, skull-cracking, throat-cutting, iron-plated roughs as Mr. Pettie has given us a sample of in his capital picture of "The Threat." The "age of chivalry" is not nearly so distant as we imagine it to be. It is to be found in Mr. Tennyson's "Idylls of the King," and in Mr. Edward Corbould's water-colour drawings, but not anywhere else, we apprehend, save in the theatrical stanzas of Tasso and Ariosto and the lying lays of the troubadours.

BANKERS' CLEARING-HOUSE.—Sir John Lubbock, the hon. secretary to the London Bankers' Clearing-house, in his usual circular with statistics for the year ending April 30 last, states that the total for 1875-6 amounted to £5,407,243,000, which is a decrease of £606,056,000 compared with the preceding year. The payments on Stock Exchange account days form a sum of £962,595,000, being a decrease of £113,990,000 as compared with 1875. The payments on consols account days for the same period have amounted to £242,245,000, showing a decrease of £18,093,000. The amounts passing through on the 4th of the month for 1876 have amounted to £240,807,000, showing a decrease of £15,143,000 as compared with 1875.

VIOLINS.—At a recent sale by auction at Dresden, one of the objects sold was the famous violin which the Count Frautmannsdorf, Grand Equerry to the Emperor Charles VI, bought from the celebrated maker, Stainer, on singular conditions. He paid in cash 66 golden caroluses, undertaking to supply him as long as he lived with a good dinner every day, 100 florins in specie every month, a new suit of clothes with gold frogs every year, as well as two casks of beer, lodging, firing, and lighting; and further, if he should marry, as many hares as he might want, with two baskets of fruit annually for himself, and as many more for his old nurse. As Stainer lived sixteen years afterwards, the violin must have cost the count 20,000 florins in cash. The instrument, which was last in the hands of an Austrian nobleman, was sold to a Russian for 2,500 thalers (about 10,000 francs). The Rev. Wilse Brown, rector of Whitstone, Exeter, in referring to this sale, gives some curious anecdotes:—"Mr. Dunbar, a friend of my father, when on a visit here, told me that he found the fragments of a violin in a friend's house, bought them for £20, glued them together, and found he had got a capital instrument. He was subsequently offered £150 for his own fiddle, and £50 for the one he had glued, which he accepted. A gentleman named Jay, of good fortune, residing many years ago in Newcastle-on-Tyne, made several violins for his own amusement. He was offered £600 for one of these, but not wanting money, he refused to sell it, saying he might not make so good a one again. In Teesdale, the Durham and Yorkshire inhabitants for amusement make violins. I lived there, holding the living of Egglestone for twenty-two years. My gardener's son made one, for which he was offered £3 by a gentleman from London. During repairs in my church some nine-grained old deal was taken down. The fiddle-makers begged all of it from the churchwarden. The shoemakers there use a peculiar-shaped knife in forming the wooden soles of the shoes. The fiddle-makers borrow these knives to shape the back of the fiddle."

BISHOPS KIDDER AND KEN.—Kidder, Bishop of Bath and Wells, after the Revolution of 1688, paid half his income into the hands of the non-juring ex-bishop Ken. An incident is recorded of him which places his integrity as well as his generosity in a conspicuous light. One of the ministers sent a message telling him he must give his vote in a certain way. "Must vote!" said the bishop. "Yes," said the messenger, "you must vote! Consider whose bread you eat!" "I eat no man's bread," indignantly replied the bishop, "except poor Dr. Ken's; and if he will take the oaths, he shall have it again. I did not intend to go to Parliament, but now I shall undoubtedly go, and vote contrary to your commands."—*Dr. Stoughton's Church of the Revolution.*

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